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THE ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the

YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st 1939.

R.C.WEBSTER, B.Sc., M.D., D.P.H.

Medical Officer of Health.

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,

DARWEN.

DECEMBER, 1940.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in presenting to you a report on the work of the Public Health Department for the year 1939. In accordance with the instructions of the Ministry of Health, the report is abbreviated, and is confined to a summary and review of new developments. It is regretted that owing to the late arrival of the figures for calculation of rates completion of the report has been delayed. A draft report was prepared some months ago but has had to be scrapped owing to a further instruction for additional abbreviation.

I wish to record my appreciation of the consideration and support shown me by the Chairman and members of the Health Committee, and my appreciation of the work of the staff of the department without whose willingness to undertake additional duties and to work abnormal hours, the functions of the department would have been gravely affected.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

MEMBERS OF THE HEALTH COMMITTEE 1939-1940.

Councillor John Gregory, J.P. - .... Mayor.
Chairman :- .....*.Counc. Dr. T.J.Costello, M.C.,M.B.
Vice-Chairman:-.....* Councillor E.L.Carus.

Alderman F.C.Duckworth.
" H.D.Holland.
" * W.Knowles,J.P.
" * R.Marsden,J.P.
" G.Pickup,J.P.
" * W.Worth,J.P.
Councillor J.Braithwaite.
" J.A.Brooks.
" J.T.Clark.
" R.Eccles.
" * J.Harwood.

*Councillor R.W.Hill.
" * Mrs.A.Hindle,J.P.
" A.Holden,J.P.
" F.E.Lightoller,J.P.
" * J.D.W.Shaw,J.P.
" R.Shorrock,C.C.
" D.Smith.
" * Mrs.B.Thompson,J.P.
" E.Westwell.
" E.Yates.

* Member of Health Sub-Committee.
Charles Coutts Byers,Town Clerk.

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STAFF OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT.

Medical Officer of Health..)G.McCloskey,M.B.,B.Ch.,B.A.O.,D.P.H.,
School Medical Officer.....)Resigned 30th April,1939.
Medical Officer of Infectious) R.C.Webster, B.Sc.,M.D.,D.P.H.,
Diseases Hospital.....) from 1st June, 1939.
Senior Sanitary Inspector..) J.C.Almond,M.R.S.I.,M.S.I.A.
Meat Inspector.)
) F. Littlecott,A.R.S.I.,M.S.I.A.
District Sanitary Inspectors..) H.R.Sulway,A.R.S.I. Resigned
) 31st March 1940.
) C.Mayor,M.R.S.I., from 1st July 1940
Matron,Infectious Diseases) Miss E.Anthony,A.R.R.C.,S.R.N.,S.C.M.
Hospital.....
Consultant Obstetrician.....A.L.Potter,M.D.,M.R.C.S.,M.C.O.G.
Health Visitors and Child)Mrs.H.H.Shawcross,Certified Midwife.
Protection Visitors.....)Miss Fairbrass,S.R.N.,R.F.N.,S.C.M.,
A.R.San.I.,H.V.Cert.
Municipal Midwives.....)M.Rigg,S.R.N.,S.C.M.
)F.B.Rimmer,S.R.N.,S.C.M.
Inspector of Midwives..... Miss M.D.Fairbrass.
School Dentist (Part time).... R.V.Clarke,L.R.C.S.,L.R.C.P.,L.D.S.
School Nurse..... Miss E.Hood.
Chief Clerk..... H.Hutchinson.
Clerks.....)W.Haworth, J.Bamford (H.M.Forces,
)September 1940) Miss M.E.Almond,
) (Temporary from September 1940)
)Mrs.H.Lightbown, (Temporary from
December, 1940).
School Medical Clerk..... Miss E. Fish.

SECTION 1.

Statistics and Social Conditions.

Area (Acres)	5,959
Population - Census 1931	36,012
Registrar-General's Estimate of Resident Population Midsummer 1939	31,160
Average Population appropriate to calculation of Deathrates	31,370
Comparability Factor	1·02
Number of inhabited houses - Census 1931	10,258
" " " end of 1939 according to Rate Books	10,367
Rateable Value	£186,805
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	£716

Unemployment - The number of insured persons in the Borough during 1939 was 13,522 and the average percentage unemployed was 21·4.

EXTRACTS FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR 1939.

LIVE BIRTHS :-	Total	Males	Females	Birth Rate
Legitimate	330	157	173	10·9
Illegitimate	12	4	8	
	342	161	181	

Rate per thousand births for England & Wales..... 15·0

STILL BIRTHS:-	25	14	11	
Rate per thousand births				76
DEATHS	495	230	265	Rate 15.7

Rate per thousand for England & Wales..... 12.1

DEATH RATES OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

All infants per 1,000 live births	21(Rate 60)
All infants for England & Wales	- (Rate 50)
Legitimate infants per 1,000 live births	21(Rate 60)
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	0(Rate 0.00)
Deaths from measles (all ages)	0(Rate 0.00)
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	2(Rate 0.06)
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	1(Rate 2.6)
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	53(Rate 1,67)

Deaths from Puerperal Causes.

	Deaths.	Rate per 1,000 Total Births.	England and Wales.
From Puerperal Sepsis.....	1	2.72	0.77
From other Puerperal Causes.....	0	0	2.16
	1	2.72	2.93

SECTION 2.

General Provisions of Health Services for the Area.

Laboratory Facilities - An electric incubator and microscopic equipment were purchased for the Bull Hill Hospital and throat swabs from patients and certain other specimens are now examined by the Medical Officer. This represents a distinct economy in time and money. The equipment arrived in September 1939 and to the end of the year, the following were examined:-

Throat Swabs for Diphtheria Bacilli...167
Cerebro Spinal Fluid..... 1
Other specimens..... 2

There are no other changes to record under this heading.

SECTION 3.

Maternity and Child Welfare.

Midwifery & Maternity Services - In September 1939, Mr. Potter, Consultant Obstetrician to the district, left for Military Service. Consultant Clinics lapsed, but increased work was taken over by the Medical Officer of Health's Clinic. Practitioners requiring assistance in the delivery of patients may call in other consultants, whose fees are covered by the Local Authority.

51 Clinics were held by the Medical Officer at which 242 women made 711 attendances.
80 Women made 155 attendances at the Clinics held by Mr. Potter.

There is no ad hoc Post-Natal Clinic but 46 women were seen as to post-natal conditions by the Medical Officer of Health and 26 by Mr. Potter.

DENTAL SCHEME.

Number of women referred to Dental Clinic by Medical Officer		26
Number of women found to require treatment		14
Number who received treatment		14
Number of treatments	(a) fillings	2
	(b) teeth extractions	142
	(c) number of patients supplied with dentures	14
	(d) number of dentures supplied	27

Supervision of Midwives. A report was made to the Central Midwives Board concerning a midwife practising in the area who was alleged to have infringed the rules of the Central Midwives Board by neglecting to call in medical aid on the occurrence of Ophthalmia Neonatorum in a child delivered by her, and by failure to send a notification of exposure to infection in relation to the same child. The Health Committee resolved that the prosecution before the Board be undertaken by the Local Authority. (Note. This case was heard in January 1940.)

Orthopaedic Clinic.
(Lancashire County Council Scheme.)

Number of individual school children attended	36
Number of individual pre-school " "	32
Number of attendances made	400
Splints supplied	39
Remedial Excercises given	90
Number of children admitted to hospital	4
Number of children referred to Manchester Royal Infirmary for X-ray and consultation	3

INFANT WELFARE CLINICS.

Darwen Children.

Number of individual children who first attended -
Under 1 year..... 231
1 - 5 years..... 43
Total number of attendances of children -
Under 1 year.....5623
1 - 5 years.....4337
Total number of examinations by the Medical
Officer of Health..... 940

Evacuees.

Total number of attendances of children -
Under 1 year..... 72
1 - 5 years..... 140
Total number of examinations by the Medical
Officer of Health..... 72

HOME VISITATION OF MOTHERS.

First visits..... 132
Visits to Expectant Mothers -Total visits..... 185

Visits to children under one year - First Visits....., 326
Total visits.....1732

Ditto. do. children 1 - 5 yrs.Total visits 2930

In addition a large number of special visits were made for various purposes.

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Mr. J. C. Almond, Senior Sanitary Inspector, submits in Sections 4,5, and 6, a summary of the work done by the Inspectorial Staff, and the Public Cleansing Department.

SECTION 4.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water Supply - there are no changes to record. Progress has not been satisfactory as regards provision of Towns supply to the houses mentioned in the 1938 report. The water supply was sampled throughout the year.

Sanitary Inspection

Primary Inspections.....	3457
Re-inspections.....	1207
Defects or nuisances discovered.....	897
Defects or nuisances abated	859
Informal Notices served....	897
Statutory " "	9
Legal proceedings	Nil

Drainage and Sewerage - There were no important extensions of sewerage during the year.

Rivers and Streams- Periodic inspections were made.

Closet Accommodation -

No. of Privy Middens.....	0
No. of Pail Closets.....	158
No. of Dry Ashpits.....	0
No. of Movable Ashbins.....	11786
No. of Houses on Water Carriage System..	10513
No. of Fresh Water Closets.....	9484
No. of Waste Water Closets.....	2183
The No. of Waste Water Closets converted to Fresh Water Closets.....	44

Public Cleansing.- Extended facilities have been provided for dealing with snow and defrosting of roads. A salvage scheme has been put in operation.

Shops Act, 1934 - Routine visits and inspections were made.

Swimming Baths and Pools - The water of the Towns Public Swimming Baths was examined bacteriologically during the year. The results were satisfactory.

Eradication of Bed Bugs - The Senior Sanitary Inspector attended a special course held by the Royal Sanitary Institute. Improved methods for dealing with bugs have been adopted. All prospective tenants for Corporation houses are visited before being allotted a house.

Offensive Trades - There are five premises in the Borough occupied by such trades. These were kept under supervision.

Factories Act, 1937 - The provisions of the Act, so far as they concern the Public Health Dept., were applied. The administration of the Act was satisfactory.

SECTION 5.

Housing.

New houses erected during the year -

By the Local Authority	0
By other Local Authorities	0
By other bodies or persons	7
By State assistance under the Housing Acts	0

SECTION 6.

Inspection and Supervision of Food.

No. of Dairy Farms	66
No. of Cowkeepers (including Dairyfarms)	69
Approximate No. of cows in the District	850
No. of Inspections during the year	227
No. of Dairymen or milk purveyors (other than cowkeepers)	168

Repairs and alterations were carried out at three farms at an estimated cost of £300.

The usual inspections were made of premises where food is prepared.

SECTION 7.

Prevalence of and Control of Infectious Diseases.

Notifiable Diseases	Total Cases Notified	Total Deaths	Hospital	
			Total Cases Removed to Hospital	Deaths in Hospital of persons belonging to district
Smallpox	-	-	-	-
Scarlet Fever	38	-	32	-
Diphtheria (including membranous croup)	60	2	60	1
Enteric fever (including paratyphoid)	-	-	-	-
Measles, excluding German Measles	1	-	-	-
Whooping Cough	19	2	-	-
Acute Pneumonia (primary and influenzal)	6	-	-	-
Puerperal pyrexia	2	-	-	-
Cerebro-spinal fever	1	-	1	-
Acute Poliomyelitis	-	-	-	-
Acute Polio-encephalitis	-	-	-	-
Encephalitis lethargica	1	1	-	-
Dysentery	-	-	-	-
Ophthalmia neonatorum	2	-	-	-
Erysipelas	4	-	3	-
Malaria (Contracted In this Country	-	-	-	-
Malaria (Contracted Abroad	-	-	-	-
Any other Diseases notifiable in district. e.g. Chicken-pox	-	-	-	-
Any other disease	-	-	-	-
Septic Throat	-	-	1	-
Chicken Pox	-	-	3	-
Tonsilitis.	-	-	1	-
Totals	134	5	101	1

Vaccination - Return for 1939.

Births 342. Successfully vaccinated 55.
Rate percentage vaccinated 16.08

During 1939 in consequence of problems raised by the Evacuation Scheme cases were received at Bull Hill Hospital from areas not normally sending patients.

During 1939 arrangements were made for bacteriological examinations at the Hospital (see Ante-section 3).

Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality during 1939.

Age Periods	New Cases				Deaths			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Resp.	
	M.	F.	M,	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Years								
0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	-	-	3	2	-	-	-	-
10	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
15	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-
20	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-
25	-	2	-	1	-	-	-	-
35	2	-	1	1	2	-	-	-
45	3	2	1	-	2	2	1	-
55	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	-
65 and upwards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
*	-	-	-	-	+1	+1	+1	-
Totals....	7	5	7	5	7	4	2	1
	12		12		11		3	

* Adjusted to agree with Registrar General's figures.

SECTION 8.

Evacuation.

In connection with the Government Evacuation Scheme, the following were received from Manchester on the 3rd September 1939.

Unaccompanied Children.....	2399
Mothers and Children.....	501
Teachers and helpers.....	162
Total.....	3062

Arrangements were made for the examination of these persons on their arrival and from the outset all the normal facilities of the Public Health Department were extended to them. While their numbers justified it special sessions were set up at Ante-Natal and Child Welfare Centres.

All billets were inspected by the Darwen Sanitary Inspectors assisted by Mr. Nowell lent from Manchester, and a very great amount of work was done in disinfecting bedding used in the scheme.

SECTION 9.

A.R.P.

The A.R.P. Casualty Services were placed on a war footing, wholetime staffs being recruited and part-time volunteers also enrolled. A vigorous effort was made to train personnel and in addition First Aid training was given to members of the Fire Service and Wardens. The numbers trained in First Aid, Home Nursing, etc., will be included in the 1940 report.

Members of the First Aid Parties, Auxiliary Fire Service, Decontamination Service were physically examined for fitness.